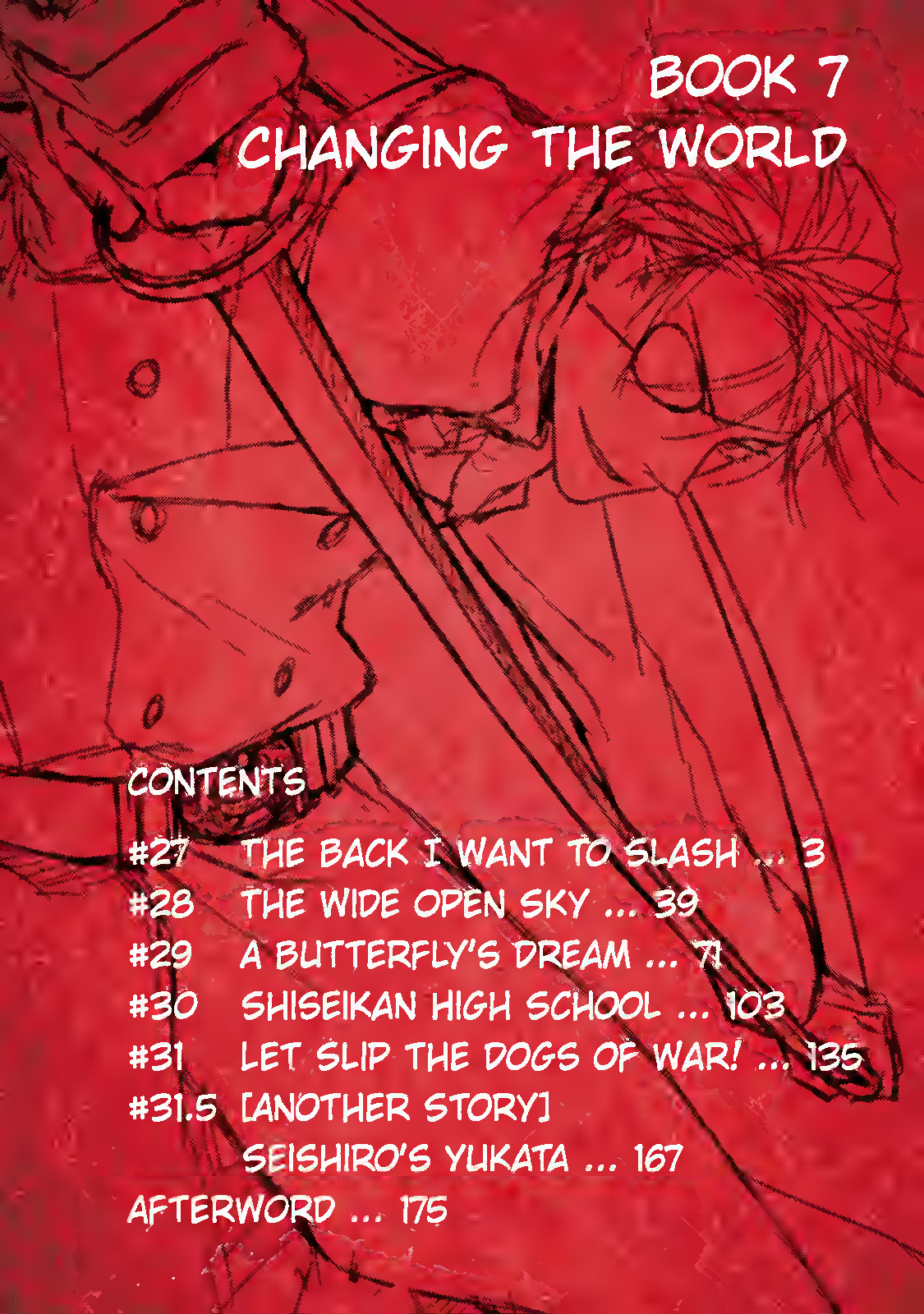
7
SAMURAI DRIVE
Fujiko Kosumi

SAMURAI DRIVE 7
FUJIKO KOSUMI



BOOK 7
CHANGING THE WORLD

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#27: THE BACK I WANT TO SLASH

Samurai Drive

CHARACTER PROFILE

A FIRST-YEAR STUDENT WHO TRANSFERRED TO SHISEIKAN HIGH SCHOOL, CLASS 1-1, HE CALLS HIMSELF "HARUMA'S COMRADE." HE IS ORIGINALLY FROM SHIGA PREFECTURE, AND HIS RESPECT FOR SEISHIRO DREW HIM TO TOKYO. HE LIVES IN THE SCHOOL DORMS AND WORKS PART-TIME TO PAY FOR HIS TUITION.

THE PROTAGONIST OF THE STORY. HARUMA IS A FIRST-YEAR STUDENT AT SHISEIKAN HIGH SCHOOL, AND HE IS IN CLASS 1-1. HE IS RUMORED TO BE THE MOST SKILLED SWORDSMAN IN HIS YEAR. THE MONSTROUS STRENGTH HE DISPLAYED DURING HIS SEARCH FOR HIS TEACHER'S KILLER SOON WON HIM THE NICKNAME "WHITE DAEMON." THAT SAID, HE'S CHRONICALLY SLEEPY AND IS A GUY OF FEW (ALMOST NO) WORDS, SO IT'S GENERALLY HARD TO TELL HE'S EVEN THERE AT ALL. THANKS TO IBUKI, HE'S STARTING TO SEEM A BIT MORE NORMAL.

THIS CLASSMATE OF HARUMA IS GENTLE AND COOL-HEADED, BUT DEEP DOWN HE'S A PASSIONATE YOUNG MAN AND A HUGE JIN FAN. REN'S THE FRIEND HE JUST CAN'T SEEM TO GET RID OF.

THIS CLASSMATE OF HARUMA IS VERY IMPULSIVE, PASSIONATE, AND EASILY MOVED TO TEARS. HE'S ALSO NOT VERY TOUGH IN THE PAST, HARUMA HAS WIPED THE FLOOR WITH HIM...

HARUMA'S OLDER BROTHER. HE IS THE RIGHT-HAND MAN OF HIS FATHER, A RADICAL SWORD ABOLITIONIST, PROVIDING SUPPORT BEHIND THE SCENES. HE DOES NOT TAKE KINDLY TO HIS BROTHER HARUMA BECAUSE HE IS STILL DEVOTED TO SEISHIRO.

HE IS THE LEADER OF THE "TRUE SWORD-BEARER" (THE EXTREMISTS) PARTY THAT IS PUSHING FOR THE "SPECIAL SWORD ABOLISHMENT EDICT." THIS MYSTERIOUS MAN IS AN EXCELLENT SPEAKER AND HAS CONNECTIONS WITH POWERFUL FIGURES IN POLITICS AND THE POLICE.

HE IS ALSO ONE OF HARUMA'S CLASSMATES. PEOPLE CALL HIM THE "FOUR-EYED DETECTIVE." MAYBE THERE'S A MYSTERIOUS ORGANIZATION CALLED THE "HAJIME KANEDA DETECTIVE GROUP."

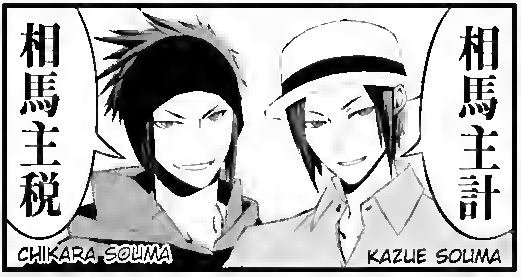
A GIFTED SWORDSMAN WHO WAS MURDERED TWO YEARS AGO AT THE AGE OF 23. HE WAS HARUMA'S MENTOR. JUST BEFORE HE DIED, HE KILLED INNOCENT CIVILIANS. AN ACT WHICH DESTROYED HIS REPUTATION AFTER HIS DEATH.

A MYSTERIOUS SWORDSMAN THAT HARASSED HARUMA. AS OF NOW, HIS TRUE IDENTITY IS UNKNOWN, BUT FROM THE WAY HE TALKS, IT'S QUITE OBVIOUS HE'S A WEIRDO.

SEISHIRO'S COMRADE. HE IS ON DEATH ROW FOR MURDER.

HE IS A SECOND-YEAR STUDENT AT SHISEIKAN AND THE SCHOOL'S STRONGEST SWORDSMAN. HE AND HARUMA WERE BOTH SEISHIRO'S DISCIPLES. HE DOTES ON HARUMA AND LOOKS OUT FOR HIM, BUT IT ANNOYS HARUMA.

A SECOND-YEAR STUDENT AT SHISEIKAN. HE IS JIN'S QUIET, COURTEOUS PARTNER. AMONG THE SECOND-YEAR STUDENTS, ONLY JIN IS MORE SKILLED WITH A SWORD. HE'S RESOLVED TO DEVOTE HIS LIFE TO JIN.

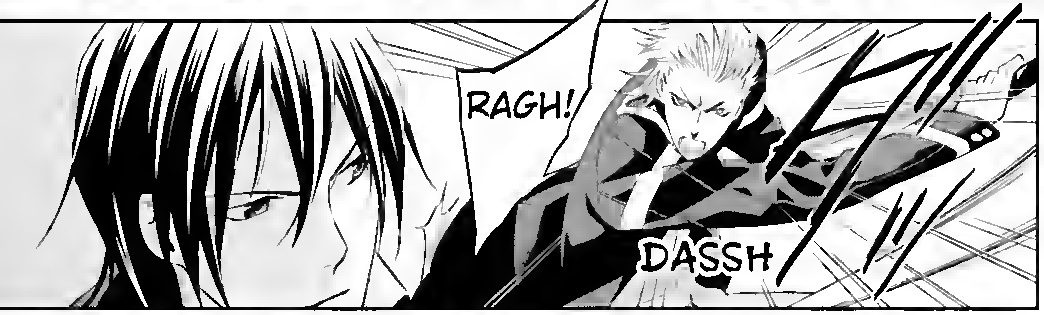


TWO SOPHOMORE BROTHERS CALLED THE "TWIN DEVILS." THE LEFT IS THE OLDER BROTHER CHIKARA AND THE RIGHT IS THE YOUNGER BROTHER, KAZUE.

STORY OUTLINE

AFTER THE MEIJI RESTORATION, THE MEIJI GOVERNMENT ALLOWED THE SAMURAI TO CONTINUE TO BEAR SWORDS. THIS PRACTICE HAS CONTINUED TO THE PRESENT, BUT THE POLITICAL CLIMATE NOW FAVORS FACTIONS AND MOVEMENTS THAT AIM TO BAN THE CARRYING OF SWORDS. IT'S IN THIS UNSTABLE ERA THAT THE FAMOUS ALL-BOYS SCHOOL, SHISEIKAN, ONE OF THE LAST SCHOOLS FOR SWORDSMEN LEFT IN JAPAN, IS CONSIDERED A "DANGEROUS THREAT" BY THE TRUE SWORD-BEARERS AND IS IN DANGER OF BEING CLOSING DOWN. MOREOVER, THE SPECIAL SWORD ABOLISHMENT ACT, WHICH RESTRICTS THE RIGHT TO BEAR SWORDS TO A CHOSEN FEW, HAS BEEN PASSED DUE TO THE EFFORTS OF REIJI AND THE TRUE SWORD-BEARERS, WHO AIM TO CONTROL JAPAN WITH THE POWER OF THE SWORD. SEEING THROUGH HIS PLAN, HARUMA AND THE OTHER SHISEIKAN STUDENTS HAVE BARRICADED THEMSELVES AT THE SCHOOL AND CONTINUED TO RESIST. JUST WHEN THINGS LOOKED HOPELESS, JIN, TASUKU, HARUMA, AND THE MOST SKILLED SWORDSMEN AT SHISEIKAN STARTED A BATTLE TO DETERMINE WHO SHALL LEAD THE SCHOOL.

Samurai Drive


RAGH!
DASSH

SWISSH
DIE, JIN SAITO!

KLANG
DON'T EVEN THINK OF TOUCHING JIN...
...UNTIL YOU DEFEAT ME.
SUCK UP.

HMMPH!
DAP
FWOOP
!
ZWISS

YOU...
!
I'VE BEEN INTERESTED IN YOU FOR SOME TIME.
KLANG
WE'VE MET AT THE STUDENT COUNCIL OFFICE QUITE A FEW TIMES. RAIOH WAS GRIEVING OVER HAVING TO WRITE OUT SO MANY CITATIONS.
君とはよく生徒会室で会ったね
YOU'VE BEEN QUITE A FEISTY STUDENT.
UGH
AND WENT BERSERK AFTER YOU OCCUPIED THE OLD AUDITORIUM.
YOU CAUSED A FIGHT OVER GUM...
....
THE SUMMIT CAN WAIT.
I GUESS I SHOULD TAKE AN OPPORTUNITY TO TEACH A TROUBLESOME STUDENT SOME MANNERS.
GRINN

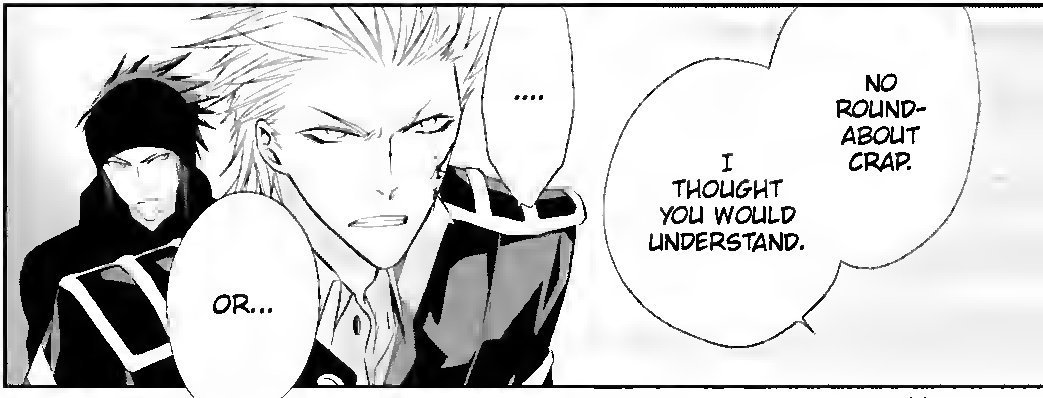
KLASSH
KLANG
BRING IT ON!
YOU BASTARDS!
STAY OUT OF THIS!
HA! YOU SHOULD TALK!
YOU'VE BEEN KEEPING US FROM FIGHTING JIN FOR SOME TIME.
TCH!
DIE!
I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR YOU IDIOTS!

SIGH
THEY'RE HAVING A REAL FIGHT THERE.
HEY, ISN'T THIS DANGEROUS?

SCRTCH
HUH?
SIGH
GEEZ.
THIS IS NO FUN AT ALL.

HEY!
GUYS!
BLING
BUZZ
PSSH
BUZZ

WHY ARE YOU LEAVING ME OUT OF THE FIGHT?
DON'T JUST SET ME OFF TO THE SIDE, SO IT'S LIKE YOU MAKE YOUR WAY TO ME.
THIS ISN'T A GAME, AND I'M NOT THE FINAL BOSS.
THAT'S NOT WHAT THIS IS ABOUT.
THIS IS A...
...FIGHT TO DECIDE WHO LEADS SHISEIKAN.


NO ROUND-ABOUT CRAP.
I THOUGHT YOU WOULD UNDERSTAND.
....
OR...

DON'T TELL ME...
...YOU'RE AFRAID OF ME.
CUT IT OUT.
JUST FIGHT ME.
WHO ARE...
...YOU CALLING AFRAID?

WE'RE NOT...
...AFRAID!

THAT BACK...

THAT'S WHAT I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT.
I WANTED TO PROTECT THIS BACK.
I SWORE ON JUST THAT.
I FELT IT WAS MY ROLE.
RIGHT NOW, THAT ISN'T THE CASE.
BUT HIS FACE IS DIFFERENT. RIGHT NOW.
...I'M COMPLETELY FREE RIGHT NOW.
EVEN IF IT IS ONLY A MOMENT ...

IT ISN'T MY JOB TO DO WHAT HE WANTS.
KLANG

...OF THE ONE SHOULDERING EVERYTHING...
...IS THE FIRST AND LAST FREEDOM ...
IF THAT...

THEN I WILL HONOR HIS WISH!

EVEN IF...
...THAT IS A PATH HE HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO TAKE.
I DON'T LIKE IT.
...AS I'VE BEEN CHASING AFTER YOU ALL OF THIS TIME,
I'VE HAD TO LOOK AT YOUR BACK...
I'VE HAD TO EARN EVERYTHING I HAD ON MY OWN.
YOU WERE SIMPLY BORN INTO IT.
I EARNED MY REPUTATION AND POSITION.
YOU'VE ALWAYS PISSED ME OFF. YOU'RE YOUNGER THAN ME...

BUT WHO CARES NOW?
IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER ANYMORE.
I KNOW THAT'S NOT WHAT JIN SAITO IS ABOUT.
I'VE WATCHED HIM ALL THIS TIME, SO I KNOW.
BUT I'LL NEVER TELL HIM.
THAT'S WHY...
SWSSH
KRANG
I'LL MAKE YOU PAY ATTENTION TO ME...
...SO I CAN DEFEAT YOU MYSELF!
JIN IS THE LEADER OF THE SECOND-YEAR STUDENTS.

THERE'S SOMETHING I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT...
BUT...
NO ONE SAYS OTHERWISE.
ONE DAY I WANTED TO FIGHT YOU AT FULL STRENGTH.
UP UNTIL NOW CHIKARA AND I HAD NO EQUAL.
THAT THE TWIN DEVILS HAD NO MATCH.
I THOUGHT WE WERE INVINCIBLE.

BUT THE WALL THAT STOOD BEFORE US...
...WAS YOU, JIN.
THAT'S THE FEELING I GET.
NOW IS THE TIME.
EVEN WITHOUT WORDS, WE KNEW.
CHIKARA'S/ KAZUE'S WILL...
...IS MY WILL.
SO, JIN...
TODAY, FINALLY ...

I'M SO JEALOUS.

WHEN DID I START FEELING THAT WAY?

...IS THAT DAY.

BUT THE TRUTH IS...

WITH OUR GENERATION POSSIBLY BEING THE LAST OF SHI SEIKAN.

I WANTED TO DEFEND IT..!

I'VE ALWAYS CARRIED MYSELF AS A LEADER NO MATTER WHAT

YOU MUST STAND AT THE TOP AND LEAD SHISEIKAN.

I WAS BORN INTO THE MINAMOTO FAMILY THAT HAS LED SHISEIKAN FOR GENERATIONS.

I WANTED TO LIVE UP TO THE EXPECTATIONS ...

...AND I WAS PROUD OF MY ROLE.

MAYBE I CAN CONSIDER THIS OPPORTUNITY...
NOW...
...AS A CHANCE.
...I WANT TO UNLEASH THE FIRE I FEEL BURNING INSIDE ME.
SO JUST THIS ONCE...
JIN, YOU'VE ALWAYS MADE ME FEEL...

...ANNOYED. IMPATIENT. EMBARRASSED.
TOWARD YOU...
...AND TOWARD MYSELF.

HA...
!HHHHA
THAT'S WHY...
THWAK
KLANG

HUFF
DRIP
PUFF
DRIP
HUFF
PUFF
HUFF
PUFF
HUFF
HUFF

KLAK
RAAGH!
THIS IS CRAZY!
KRANG
THEY'RE GETTING REALLY BEAT UP!
SWOOSH
I CAN'T STAND TO WATCH THIS ANYMORE!
KLANK
BASSH
PRESIDENT MINAMOTO!
SLIDE

WAAHH
JUST..
JUST...
PRESIDENT MINAMOTO!
JUST STOP THIS!
DRIP
BUT...
DRIP
YOU FELT DIFFERENTLY AND HAD DIFFERENT OPINIONS ...
IT'S TRUE ...
WE'RE ALL STUDENTS OF SHISEIKAN!
DRIP
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS TO YOURSELF?
WHY DO YOU HAVE TO GO THIS FAR?
WHY DO WE HAVE TO FIGHT LIKE THIS?
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
I THOUGHT WE ALL JUST WANT TO PROTECT SHISEIKAN!
HUFF

TAP
WOBBLE
PRESIDENT MINAMOTO!
PLEASE WAIT!
STOP IT.
SIR!
UGH
REN!
WHY ARE YOU EVEN ASKING WHY?
YOU SEE HOW SERIOUS THEY ARE, AND YOU STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND?

THE SOUMA BROTHER'S GROUP?
TASUKU'S GROUP?
NONE OF THAT MATTERS ANYMORE!
THAT'S NOT WHAT THIS IS ABOUT!
I'M NOT JUST MAKING A PRETTY SPEECH HERE!
THEY'RE WIELDING THEIR SWORDS FOR WHAT THEY BELIEVE IN.
IT'S HOW THEY LIVE.
IT'S WHAT WE'RE WITNESSING.
IF YOU STOP THEM, SHISEIKAN IS DONE FOR.

BLUSH
UH. YEAH!
Did I do something wrong.
WELL SAID, REN.
...TAUGHT YOU JUST THE OTHER DAY!
AND THAT'S WHAT THE SOUMA BROTHERS ...
HEY...
...ROKUSHO.
THIS BATTLE...
PAT
YOU'RE RIGHT. FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE THIS LOOKS REALLY MESSED UP.
...SHOWS THE SITUATION SHISEIKAN IS IN.
THERE'S NO CHOICE BUT TO DRIVE FORWARD WITH WHAT WE BELIEVE IN.
BUT YOU KNOW WHAT?

IT DOES LOOK LIKE SHISEIKAN'S DIVIDED.
BUT IF WE ALL HAVE THE SAME GOAL...
...WE'LL GET THROUGH THINGS TOGETHER...
...AND WORK AS ONE GIANT IDIOT.
GRINN
BUT DON'T YOU THINK...
...THIS IS KIND OF EXCITING?

JUST
WATCH.

WATCH CAREFULLY.
AND NEVER FORGET.
THIS...
...IS SHISEIKAN.
END

#28: THE WIDE OPEN SKY

WH-
WHOA...
BASTARD!

RAGH!
THIS MOMENT WAS BURNED IN...
I CAN'T LOOK AWAY.
THIS...
...EVERYONE'S HEARTS AND MINDS.
...IS...
...OVER!

FWOOM
FWOOM
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF

W...
WHOOOOAH
JIN!
WHOAAA!
LISTEN UP!
HUFF
I'M TELLING YOU THIS AS THE TOP SWORDSMAN OF SHISEIKAN.
SHISEIKAN IS RIGHT TO BE ANGRY...
...ABOUT THE LIES ON THE NEWS AND AT THE PUBLIC FOR BELIEVING THOSE LIES.
BUT MAKE NO MISTAKE.
HUFF

THEY CAN SAY WHATEVER THEY WANT. WE DON'T CARE ABOUT OUR REPUTATION OR VALUE TO SOCIETY.
THE IDENTITY OF OUR TRUE FOE IS REIJI.
THE PUBLIC HAS BEEN LED ON BY THE TRUE SWORD-BEARERS' LIES.
THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THE PRIDE OF SWORDSMEN.
REIJI'S TRUE AIM IS TO RULE JAPAN BY THE SWORD.
WE HAVE TO DO THE ONE THING A REAL SWORDSMAN WOULD DO.
SO IT'S UP TO US, THE STUDENTS OF SHISEIKAN.

THE PUBLIC DOESN'T KNOW THE TRUTH.
THEY WILL BELIEVE THE TRUE SWORD PARTY AND SHUN US.
BUT YOU KNOW WHAT?
EVEN IF THE ENTIRE WORLD SEES US AS EVIL...
DESTROY THE TRUE SWORD-BEARERS ...
...AND THEIR LEADER REIJI!
...PROTECTING THE WORLD FROM THE SHADOWS...
...ISN'T HALF-BAD, DON'T YOU THINK?

FIGHT.
IF YOU TRULY LOVE THE SWORD...
...BECOME ONE...
...AND FIGHT!
YEAAAAH
YEAAAH
WOBBLE
YEAAAH
LET'S DO THIS!

DASSH
JIN!
JIN.
DROP
THANKS, HIDEHITO.
THAT WAS CLOSE...
ARE YOU OKAY, JIN?
JIN...
WOW... THAT TOOK IT OUT OF ME.
YEAH... TAKING ON SIX GUYS AT ONCE WHILE RECOVERING FROM AN INJURY WAS TOUGH.
HE ALWAYS TAKES THE CHOICE ROLE.
LOOKS LIKE TASUKU IS TAKING CARE OF THE REST.
THIS IS HOW I LIVE!
YOU SAW THAT?!
YEAH!
YEAH!

SORRY, BUT I NEED TO REST FOR A MINUTE.
GRIICH
OH WAIT!
HARUMA!
YOU'RE COMING WITH ME.
I NEED TO TALK TO YOU.
JUST GET GOING!
NOOOOO..
OKAY! YOU'VE MADE YOUR POINT!
HEY, JIN.

KNOCK
SWING
THAT LAST SLASH WAS GREAT—NOW WE CAN DIE HAPPY.
DON'T BE STUPID.
I'LL LEAVE THE REST TO YOU.

WHAT...
...DO YOU WANT?
JUST COME OVER HERE.
SIT.
TMP

I WAS TOLD TO SHOW IT TO YOU SOMEDAY.
NICE VIEW, HUH?
YOU CAN SEE ALL OF SHISEIKAN FROM HERE.
...SECRET PLACE.
THIS WAS SEISHIRO'S...
TWITCH
GRR
BUT YOU STILL HAVE LOTS TO WORK ON BEFORE YOU REACH SEISHIRO. KEEP AT IT!
YOUR FORM WASN'T BAD.
SEISHIRO'S ...
HARUMA!
I'M GOING!
FWSSH
YOU LOOKED GOOD IN THE FIGHT.
IS THAT ALL...
...YOU WANTED TO SAY?

THE ONES WHO MURDERED SEISHIRO ARE REIJI AND YUKINARI.
GRIICH
BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP
THE ONES WHO TOOK SEISHIRO FROM ME ARE...
THAT MAN, REIJI!
AND YUKINARI?!
BA-DUMP
CALM DOWN!
THE REASON I CAN TELL YOU THE TRUTH IS YOU'RE NOT ALONE ANYMORE!
YOU LISTENING?
THE REASON I CAN TELL YOU THIS NOW IS...
WHA...
WHAT?
I LEARNED THIS THE OTHER DAY AT YOUR HOUSE.

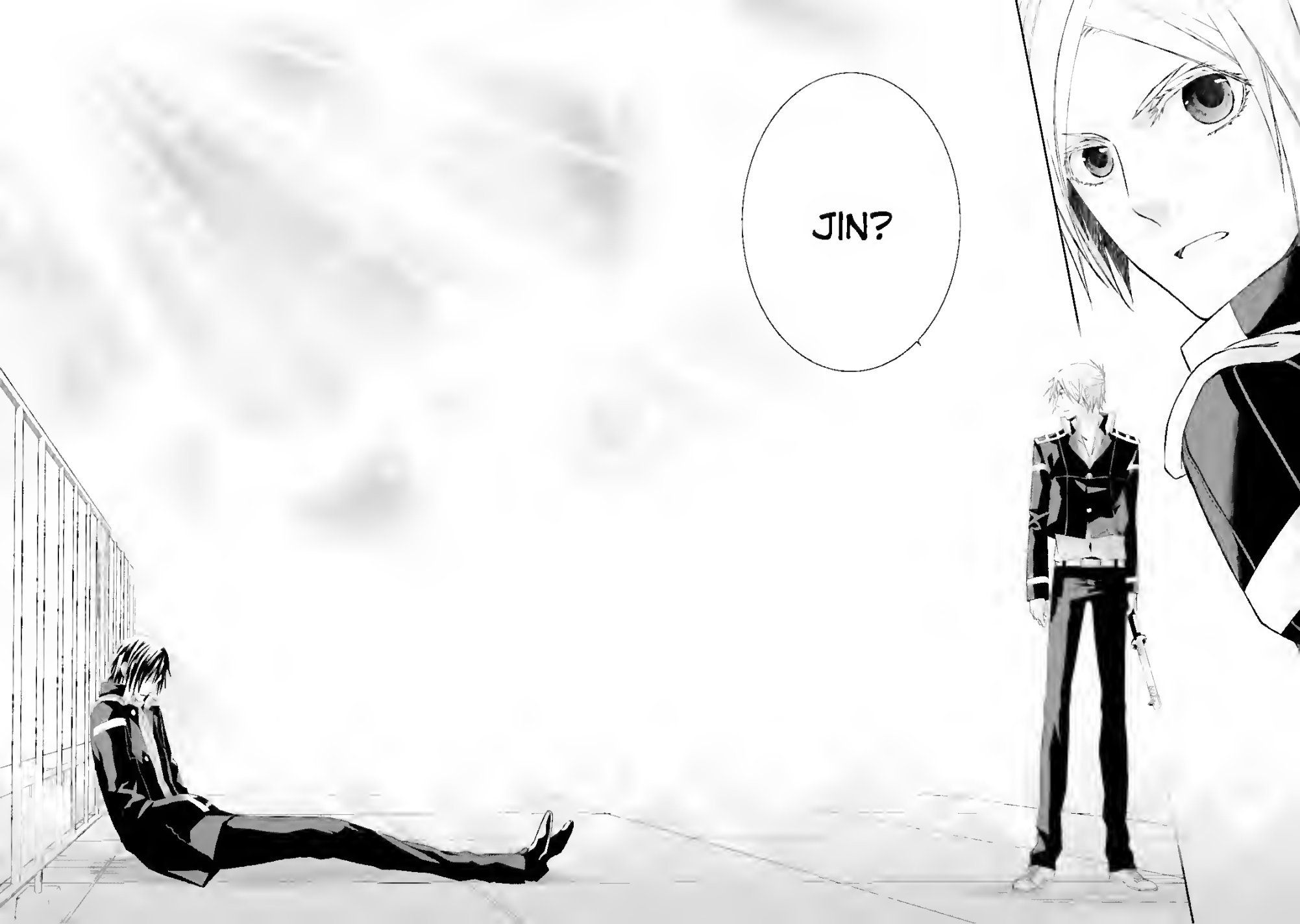
NO ONE WOULD SEE THE TRUTH, AND YOU WANDERED ALONE IN THE DARKNESS.
TWO YEARS AGO ON THAT DAY...
...REIJI'S TOOK EVERYTHING FROM YOU.
BUT IT'S DIFFERENT NOW.
YOU HAVE IBUKI.
YOU HAVE YOUR FRIENDS.
SO YOU NEED TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO FOR YOURSELF.
THE DARKNESS WON'T CONSUME YOU NOW.
YOU'RE NOT ALONE ANYMORE.

BLAAP
I...
...KNOW...
...THAT
I DON'T NEED YOU TO TELL ME.
I SEE.
BESIDES...
JIN...
...YOU NAG.
ALWAYS.
ALWAYS.
YOU ACT LIKE. .
WITH KOUKI...
...BECAUSE HE TRUSTED YOU...
...YOU COULD ACT LIKE...
AND EVERYTHING ELSE...
...YOU WERE HIS REPLACE-MENT!
SEISHIRO LEFT YOU WITH EVERYTHING...
BUT...
...HE...
...DIDN'T TRUST ME WITH ANYTHING.

SEISHIRO THOUGHT YOU WERE GREAT.
!
IT WASN'T HOW HE WANTED IT TO GO, BUT IT CAME INTO YOUR POSSESSION WHEN HE DIED.
THAT'S WHY HE SAID...
...HE WOULD EVENTUALLY ENTRUST KOUYA TO YOU.
IF HE WERE ALIVE...
...SEISHIRO WOULD HAVE PASSED IT TO YOU ANYWAY.
KOUYA IS DEFINITELY YOURS.
...AS ENTRUSTING THEM WITH YOUR SOUL.
...IS THE SAME...
LEAVING A SWORD TO SOMEONE ..
...
I WASN'T GOOD ENOUGH TO EARN IT.

I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO WALK ALONGSIDE THEM.
I FELT LIKE I WAS ALWAYS CHASING AFTER THEM.
BUT...
WELL...
THAT'S ALL I WANTED TO SAY.
MMMM
MAN, I'M TIRED.
I'M GONNA SLEEP.
?!
YOU GO BACK TO IBUKI.
BUMP
YOU CALLED ME HERE...
...AND NOW THIS?!

HARUMA.
I ALWAYS THOUGHT OF YOU AS MY DEAR LITTLE BROTHER.
HARUMA.


JIN?

KLAK
IBUKI.
KLIK
IBUKI.
WHOA!
BUMP
KLAK
IBUKI.
KLIK
IBUKI.
IBUKI!!
HARUMA.

WHAT'S WRONG? YOU LOOK PALE...
BUMP
HARUMA?
HE...!
HE WAS ALWAYS ...
...SO CONDE-SCENDING!
ALWAYS!
ALWAYS!

EVEN NOW...
HE SAID...
...EVERY-THING HE WANTED TO SAY...
...AND I WASN'T ABLE TO TELL HIM ANYTHING!
I HAVEN'T TOLD HIM...
...ANYTHING!
AND YET, HE...

HE JUST
WENT
AND DIED!

OKAY.

END

#29: A BUTTERFLY'S DREAM

THAT IDIOT!
SLAM
WHAT WAS HE...
...DOING?
BAMM
TASUKU
HE...
JIN SAITO...
SCRCCH

JIN...

...FROM THAT MOMENT.
LET'S GO BACK TO SHISEIKAN.
...HAD ALREADY MADE UP HIS MIND
JIN...

ARE YOU REALLY GOING?
ARE YOU GOING TO LEAVE YOUR FAMILY...
...AND EVERYTHING ELSE BEHIND?
SHISEIKAN IS WAITING FOR ME.

EVERY-
THING
THAT
I LIVE
FOR...
...IS
WAITING
FOR ME
THERE.
THAT'S
WHY...
I WILL TAKE
THE SAME
PATH AS
MY FRIENDS,
WHATEVER
THE COST.
....
I'M
SO
GLAD...
...IT
WAS
YOU.

IN THIS...
...DAY AND AGE...
...OUR GRAND-FATHERS ARRANGED OUR MARRIAGE.
AND YOU'RE YOUNGER THAN ME TOO...
EVERY-ONE WAS TALKING ABOUT US...
...BUT THEY WERE WRONG.
I'M GLAD IT WAS YOU.
I'M...
...SO PROUD OF YOU.

AND I ALWAYS WILL BE.
...WON'T SAY ANYTHING EITHER, HUH?
YOU...

THAT'S WHY...
...I LOVE YOU, MAN.
WHAT IS THERE...
...FOR ME TO SAY TO YOU?
SLASSH!
YOU WERE THE ONE...
...WHO BROUGHT ME INTO THE LIGHT
YOU GAVE ME A REASON TO LIVE.

LIVE FOR MY SAKE!
AND A PLACE TO BE.
...CAME WITH YOUR BURDEN.
I SAW THE THOUGHTS AND CONVICTIONS THAT...
I STOOD AT YOUR SIDE...
...DURING THESE PEACEFUL DAYS.

HIDEHITO...
THANK YOU...
LET'S ...
...GO.
I DON'T CARE WHO.
TRY AND MAKE ME SUBMIT.
I HAD TO BE BY HIS SIDE.
I'LL LEAVE THE REST TO YOU.
STOP PLAYING AROUND!
I KNOW THIS.
THERE WAS NO OTHER PATH FOR ME.
YES.
THERE'S NOTHING LEFT TO SAY.

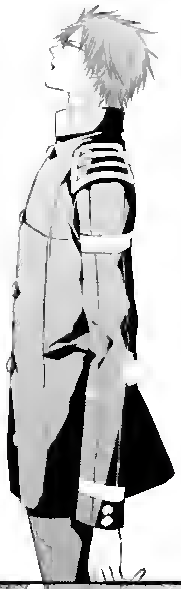
WHAT I FEEL IS A SENSE OF SPEED.

HIS WAS A LIFE DRIVEN.

FASTER THAN OTHERS.

HIS FLAME WAS IMMEASURABLY BRIGHT AND MEANINGFUL.

HIS SHORT LIFE WAS WORTH A THOUSAND YEARS.



THERE IS NO SADNESS—NO REGRET.

FOR JIN, WHO DROVE THROUGH TO HIS LIFE'S CONCLUSION, OR FOR ME, WHO WAS WITH HIM TO THE VERY END.

ALL I NEED TO DO NOW...

...IS TELL THEM HOW HE FELT.

I HAVE TO TELL THEM WHAT HE BELIEVED IN, WHO HE LOVED...

...AND HOW WE CAN REACH THE FUTURE HE ENVISIONED.

I HAVE TO TELL THEM.

JIN HAS ENTRUSTED EVERYTHING TO YOU.
HE TRUSTED YOU AND YOU ALONE, HARUMA KOKONOE.
...JIN'S WORDS FOR YOU, AND ETCH THEM INTO YOUR MIND.
SO YOU MUST TAKE THESE WORDS...
PUT SHISEIKAN ON YOUR SHOULDERS!

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, HIDEHITO?
I WILL FOLLOW JIN'S WISHES...
...UNTIL THE VERY END.
JIN SAITO HAS DIED.

WITH HIS DEATH, SHISEIKAN ...
...WILL BE UNITED EVEN STRONGER AND COME FIGHT US.
THIS IS A GREAT THREAT!
A THREAT?
THEY CARRY ON THE SPIRIT OF SEISHIRO SHINDO.
THERE'S A POSSIBILITY THAT THEIR YOUTH AND PASSION COULD CATCH THE PUBLIC'S ATTENTION.
UNTIL THE DAY THE "SPECIAL SWORD ABOLISHMENT EDICT" IS ENACTED...
...WE CANNOT HAVE ANY RISKS WHATSOEVER.
WE MUST USE ALL THE WEAPONS AT OUR DISPOSAL TO EXTERMINATE THEM!

WE CANNOT AFFORD TO HAVE ANOTHER FIGURE LIKE SEISHIRO SHINDO APPEAR.
NOTHING SHOULD CLOUD THE FUTURE YOU HAVE PLANNED!
RIN.
DO AS YOU PLEASE.
THANK YOU.

BUT KNOWING YOU, YOU'VE ALREADY MADE A FEW MOVES...
...BEFORE THIS WAS EVEN MENTIONED.
WSSSH
A HARD WORKER AS ALWAYS.
YUP.
...I WOULD PREFER THAT NO ONE USE FIREARMS AGAIN...
AT THAT TIME...
THINGS ARE ABOUT TO GET A LITTLE BUSIER.

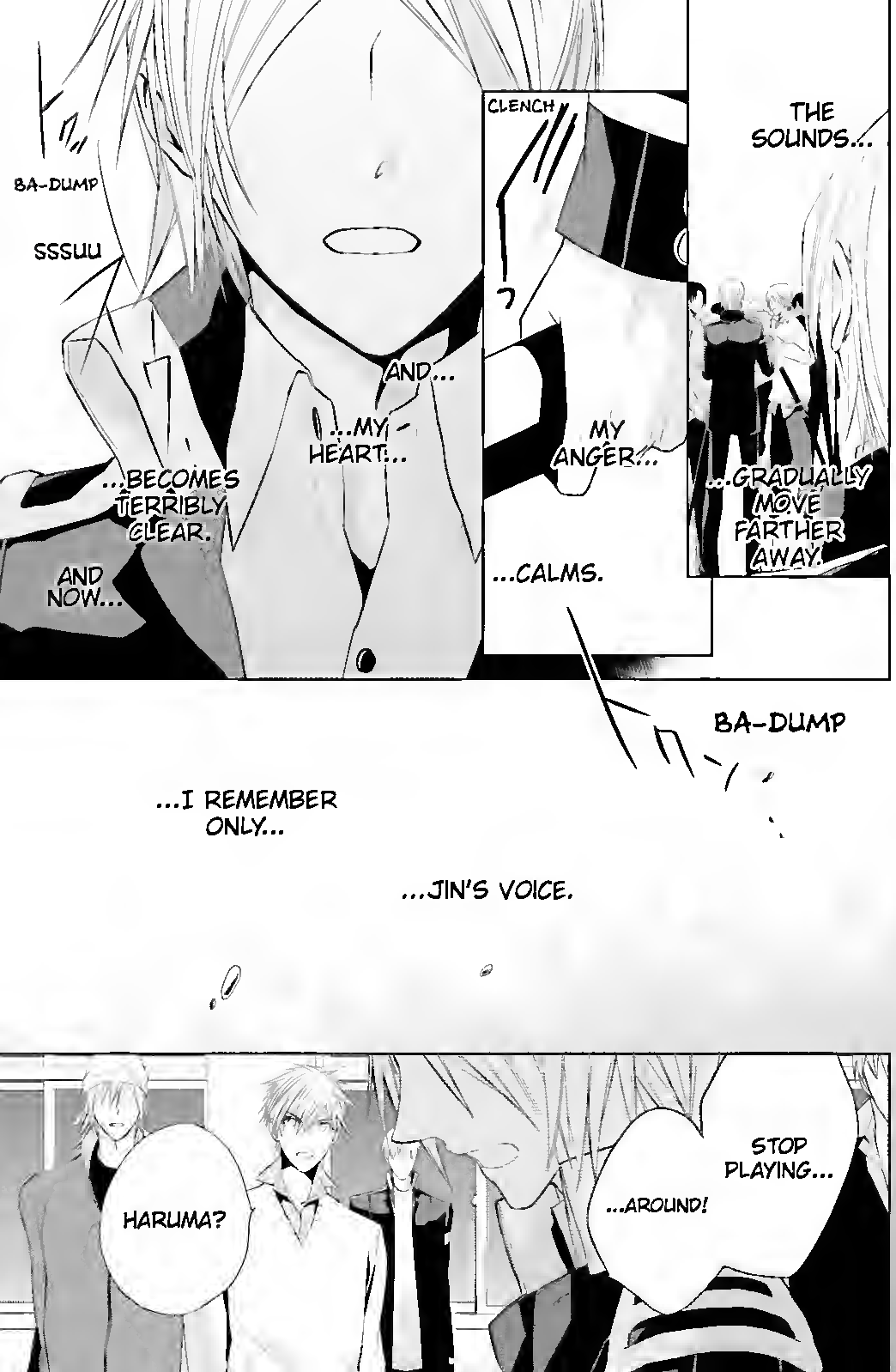
WE'RE WORKING TOWARD A COMMON GOAL.
LET'S TRY TO ENJOY OUR-SELVES.
NOW...
LET US PREPARE THE STAGE.
...YUKINARI.
FINALLY...
THE DAY I'VE BEEN DREAMING OF HAS COME.
THE DAY I...

POLICE
THE POLICE WILL STORM THE PREMISES UNLESS THE STUDENTS SURRENDER BEFORE DAWN TOMORROW.
RIOT POLICE HAVE SURROUNDED THE CAMPUS.
THE STUDENTS, INCLUDING A SUSPECTED MURDERER, HAVE BARRICADED THEMSELVES INSIDE THE SCHOOL.
...CRUSH SHISEIKAN BY MY OWN HAND!
I'M REPORTING FROM ABOVE SHISEIKAN HIGH SCHOOL!
THERE ARE SO MANY OF THEM!
THEY SAY THEY ARE DOING THIS BECAUSE THERE'S A HIGH LEVEL OF TENSION IN THE SCHOOL...
...AS THE DAY APPROACHES WHEN THE SPECIAL SWORD ABOLISHMENT EDICT WILL BE ENACTED.

THEY MAY HAVE MADE MISTAKES, BUT WE OWE AT LEAST THIS TO THESE YOUNG SWORDSMEN, WHO STILL HAVE MUCH IN FRONT OF THEM.
IT'S BECAUSE OF THEIR RESISTANCE TO BANNING SWORDS THAT HAVING OTHER SWORDSMEN TALK TO THEM IS THE BEST COURSE OF ACTION.
WE WILL TAKE COMMAND OF THIS OPERATION.
WE WILL CONDUCT THIS WITH UTMOST SINCERITY.
BUT THEY ARE ALL SWORDS-MEN WITH THEIR OWN BELIEFS.
THERE IS A WORST-CASE SCENARIO WHERE THE WILL ATTACK US.
BUT REST ASSURED...

...WE, THE TRUE SWORD-BEARERS, WILL STOP THE STUDENTS OF SHISEIKAN.
WE SHALL PROTECT YOU.
EVEN IF BLOOD MUST BE SPILLED.

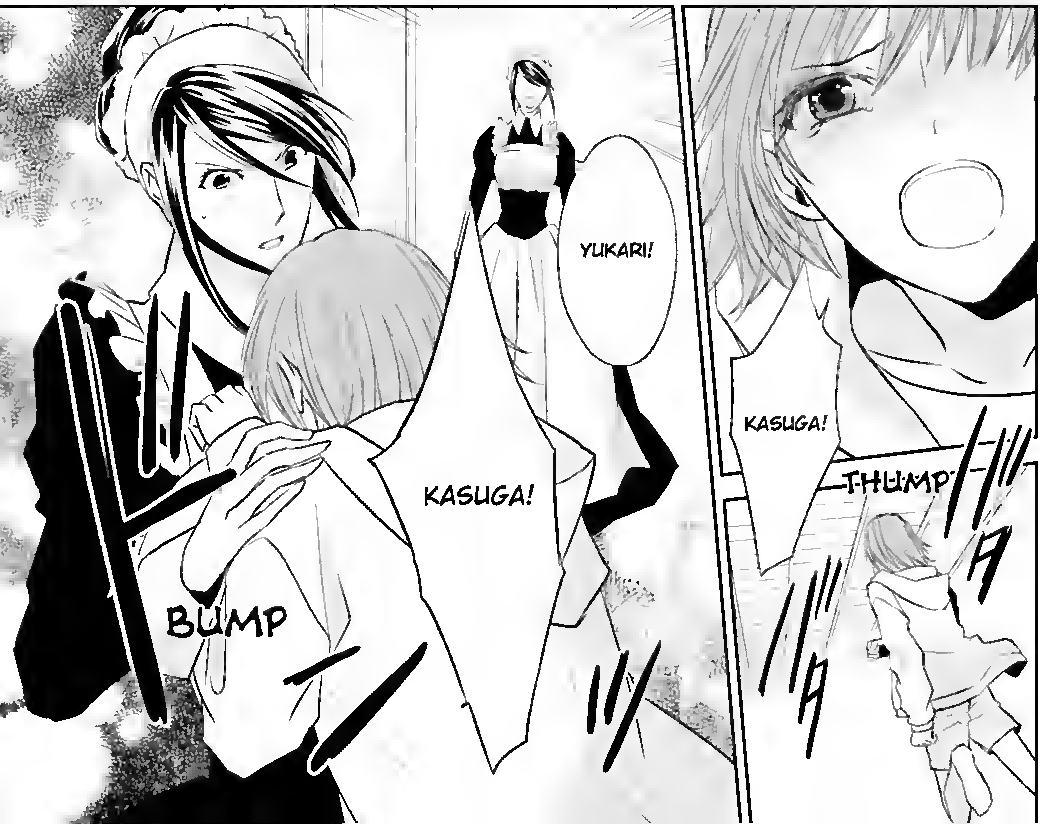
HEH!
THOSE DAMN EXTREMISTS.
TALKING STRAIGHT OUT OF THEIR ASS.
THEY...
...TOOK JIN FROM US...
...AND NOW THEY'RE SAYING THE WANT TO WIPE OUT SHISEIKAN?!
PSST
HEY!
BA-DUMP
CALM DOWN.
DON'T PLAY INTO THEIR HANDS.
BA-DUMP~
EVERYTHING IS FILLED WITH NOISE.
BA-DUMP
EVERYTHING IS LOUD...


BA-DUMP
SSSUU
AND...
...MY HEART...
...BECOMES TERRIBLY CLEAR.
AND NOW...
CLENCH
MY ANGER...
...CALMS.
THE SOUNDS...
...GRADUALLY MOVE FARTHER AWAY.
BA-DUMP
...I REMEMBER ONLY...
...JIN'S VOICE.
HARUMA?
STOP PLAYING...
...AROUND!

LET THEM SAY WHAT THEY WANT.
NO MATTER WHAT THEY SAY...
...SHISEIKAN WON'T CHANGE.
HARUMA?
WE'LL THROW IT ALL...
...BACK AT THEM.
WE WILL CRUSH THEM.
THE EXTREMISTS AND REIJI.
THEY WILL PAY.
FOR WHAT THEY DID TO HIM TOO.

HEH
HEY, GUYS!
THE WHITE-HAIRED RUNT IS RIGHT! KEEP THAT IN MIND!
WHAT'S THE MATTER, HARUMA?!
一年に説教食らうなんて…!!
WE SHOULDN'T HAVE TO BE REMINDED OF THIS BY A FIRST-YEAR STUDENT!
YEAH!
BUMP
HMM?
I WAS SO MOVED!
RING
RING
T-TASUKU!
THE TV!
THE TV!!
WHAT?
ニュース速報
BREAKING NEWS
RING

WHAT...?!
?!
THUMP
KASUGA!
THUMP


YUKARI!
KASUGA!
BUMP
KASUGA!
THUMP

MISS YUKARI...
I SAW THE NEWS!
WHY?!
WHY IS EVERYONE ...?!
IT'S JUST LIKE WHAT HAPPENED WITH MY BROTHER!
IF IT KEEPS GOING LIKE THIS, HARUMA WILL ALSO...!
WHY?!
EVERYONE IS JUST...
...TRYING TO DO WHAT THEY THINK IS RIGHT!
WHY DO THEY HAVE TO DIE?!
NEWSFLASH! I REPEAT...

EP OUT
OUT
P OUT
UT
KEEP
DESPITE THE TENSE SITUATION AT SHISEIKAN HIGH SCHOOL...
NOBUCHIKA ODANI, THE CONVICTED MURDERER...
...WHO ALSO ATTENDED THAT SCHOOL...
HARUMA...
YUKINARI...
...HAS JUST BEEN EXECUTED. I REPEAT...

...THE DEATH ROW INMATE, NOBUCHIKA ODANI...
...HAS JUST BEEN EXECUTED!
END

#30: SHISEIKAN HIGH SCHOOL
THE EXECUTED PRISONER, NOBUCHIKA ODANI...
...HAD THE SWORD BEARING PRIVILEGE, BUT USED THAT SWORD TO KILL INNOCENT PEOPLE.
THEN, TWO YEARS LATER, A WELL-KNOWN ADVOCATE FOR SWORDS, SEISHIRO SHINDO, WAS KILLED BY A SWORD AFTER HE HAD MURDERED AN INNOCENT PERSON.
THESE INCIDENTS HAD A BIG INFLUENCE ON HOW BEARING SWORDS WAS VIEWED IN JAPAN.
AND THEY WERE THE CATALYST FOR A MAJOR SHIFT IN PUBLIC OPINION.

STOMP
STOMP
BROTHER...
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
#30: SHISEIKAN HIGH SCHOOL

IT'S TIME.
NOW THEN...
SCRICH
LET'S BE QUICK ABOUT THIS.
THEY'RE HERE.
HAH! BRING IT ON.
HE'S TOTALLY THE VILLAIN!
LOOK AT THAT EYE PATCH GUY!
SOCIETY SEES HIM AS THE HERO THOUGH.
....
HA HA HA
GRAB
COME ON.
CHILL OUT.
JUST TAKE IT EASY.
TWITCH

DON'T BARF.
KREEK
JUST TRY TO ENJOY YOURSELF. USE WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED.
YOU GET TO SHOW THE WORLD YOUR SKILLS.
UGH
WE'RE ABOUT TO FIGHT! DID YOU EVEN LOOK AT THE RIOT POLICE?! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO NOT BE NERVOUS!
I'm about to puke!
LIKE I CAN!
OH, REALLY?
BLEEEGH
IT'S A SPECIAL FIGHT!
YEAH. MEANING WE HAVE TO DRESS FOR THE OCCASION.
RIGHT!
FWIIP
YOU HEARD THAT...
...GUYS!
TAKE A DEEP BREATH AND...
...CHANGE INTO YOUR DRESS UNIFORM.

HOW ARE THEY SO CHEERFUL ABOUT THIS?
I MEAN HOW?
CLASS 1-1
SLAMM
WE'RE ABOUT TO GO TO WAR, AND THE SECOND-YEAR STUDENTS AREN'T NERVOUS AT ALL!
YEAH.
YEAH ...
I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RIGHT.
EVEN AFTER WHAT HAPPENED WITH JIN...
...SEEM CALM.
YOU...

WHEN I SAW JIN FOR THE LAST TIME...
I WAS MOVED.
I'M NOT SURE HOW TO SAY IT.
...IT FELT LIKE I SHOULD LOOK FORWARD AND NOT BE DE-PRESSED.
IT'S ALMOST AS IF HE WERE SAYING...
"THAT'S NOT WHAT I WANT TO SAY."
SO I WANT TO MAKE SURE I DON'T BETRAY... ...THAT MESSAGE.
BECAUSE THIS...
...IS OUR LAST BATTLE.

GARRR
GARRR
WE ALWAYS FIGHT AS A TEAM, RIGHT?
I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU! THIS WON'T BE YOUR LAST BATTLE?
HUH? I'M JUST SAYING THAT THIS PARTICULAR FIGHT WILL BE OVER.
YOU IDIOT!
I KNOW YOU'RE DETERMINED, BUT ENOUGH WITH THE "LAST BATTLE" CRAP!
DON'T GIMME THAT!
WHAT?
SLAMM
SHUT UP!
CHATTER
BESIDES, YOU'RE ALWAYS—!
CHATTER
CHATTER
....
OH, YOU WERE WORRIED ABOUT ME?
Thanks...
SWIISH
I WAS JUST TRYING TO BE NICE TO YOU, AND THIS IS WHAT I GET.
TCH! STOP TRYING TO ACT ALL COOL.
YOU MAKE IT SOUND LIKE YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE READY FOR THIS.
THAT WAS REALLY EMBARRASSING-TO-WATCH!
はずかしいものを見てしまった!!!
AHHHH
THAT'S WHAT YOU DO
.. ALL THE TIME.
WHAT'S WITH ALL OF THE TOUCHY-FEELY TALK?
I COULD BARELY STAND TO BE IN THE SAME ROOM.
AHHHH
とはあえこちねい。
THIS TIME HE KEEPS IT TO HIMSELF.

....
BUT YOU KNOW ...
WHAT WE'RE ABOUT TO DO NOW...
...IS JUST THAT.
WE WILL HURT OTHERS WITH SWORDS.
AND MAYBE EVEN DIE.
IT'S NOT JUST SOME STREET FIGHT OR BRAWL THIS TIME.
IT'S A REAL WAR.
THE EXTREMISTS LITERALLY WANT...
...TO WIPE US OUT AND SHISEIKAN ALONG WITH IT.
STILL...
EVERYONE HAS THEIR OWN REASON TO FIGHT.
AND THEY HAVE COME PREPARED.

IF YOU GET A CHANCE TO AVENGE HIM IN BATTLE...
...WHAT WILL YOU DO?
YOU ALMOST HAVE IT.
YOU'RE SO CLOSE TO THE TRUTH ABOUT SEISHIRO NOW.
BUT...
IT'S THE SAME FOR YOU, RIGHT?
IF YOU...
...TRY TO KILL SOMEONE...
...I WILL STOP YOU.

I CAN'T BACK DOWN.
BUT THIS IS HOW I SHOW MY HONESTY AND INTEGRITY.
YOU MIGHT NOT THINK THIS IS THE TIME FOR THIS.
I STILL DON'T UNDER-STAND WHAT SEISHIRO...
...WAS THINKING WHEN HE MURDERED PEOPLE.
BUT WHAT I LEARNED FROM HIM...
...STILL LIVES STRONG INSIDE ME.
THAT'S WHY...
JUST LIKE EVERY-ONE ELSE, I'LL GO INTO THIS FIGHT...
...TO PROTECT WHAT I BELIEVE IN.
THE SWORD IS A SIGN OF ONE'S DEVOTION TO SINCERITY. I MUST UPHOLD A CODE OF HONESTY AND RIGHTEOUSNESS.
THOSE WERE SEISHIRO'S WORDS.
IBUKI.

IBUKI ...
THAT'S FINE.
DO WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO...
...IBUKI.
I WILL ALSO ...
IBUKI AND I...
WHOO
NODD
...WILL PROBABLY NEVER FULLY SEE EYE TO EYE.
HEY!
...IS ANOTHER MATTER.
THAT'S FINE. WHETHER OR NOT YOU CAN REALLY STOP ME...
YOU CAN SAY ALL THAT, BUT DON'T GET MAD WHEN I STOP YOU.
I'M GOING TO DO EVERY-THING IN MY POWER TO STOP YOU.
...I BELIEVE IN.
...FOLLOW THE PATH...
HEH
WHAT...
...IS THAT?

BUT THAT'S OKAY.
UGH. WHATEVER.
I WAS GETTING NERVOUS...
SLAMM
VICTORY?
WE BOTH KNOW EXACTLY...
HOW THE OTHER FEELS.
YEAH, LET'S GO TO O'DONALD'S FOR SOMETHING TO EAT.
YOU'VE NEVER BEEN, RIGHT?
WHY ARE WE STILL FRIENDS ANYWAY?
WE'RE POLAR OPPOSITES.
WELL IT'S ALL RIGHT.
LET'S JUST CLEAN THIS MESS UP AND THROW A VICTORY PARTY.
NO.
BECAUSE YOU WERE THE FIRST ONE TO UNDERSTAND ME..
I WANT TO GO.
YEAH.
IT'LL BE MY TREAT.
SO...
...I'LL FOLLOW A DIFFERENT PATH THAT'S CLOSEST TO YOURS.
...LET'S WRAP THIS UP QUICKLY.

YOU'RE BACK.
LOOKING GOOD, GENTS.
YOU'VE GOT A NICE LOOK IN YOUR EYES.
OKAY! IT'S TIME!
LET'S GET RILED UP!
YOU KNOW FULL WELL THE MEANING OF OUR DRESS UNIFORMS!
FWAP
CLENCH
THIS BATTLE IS NO JOKE.
THIS SPECIAL WHITE COLOR SHOWS THE STRENGTH OF OUR CONVICTIONS.

THIS ISN'T ABOUT SHOWING OUR OWN KIND OF JUSTICE OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT.
WE DON'T LIKE WHAT THE EXTREMISTS ARE DOING.
THAT'S WHY WE'LL CRUSH THEM. NOTHING MORE. NOTHING LESS.
LET'S GO ALL OUT, BOYS.
TRY NOT TO DIE TOO EASILY.
WE'RE THE VILLAINS, SO BE LIKE ONE AND SURVIVE!
LET'S SHOW THEM...
...THE GREATEST BATTLE THEY'VE EVER SEEN.

ALL STUDENTS OF SHISEIKAN...
...MOVE OUT!

HARUMA?
....

IT'S NOTHING.
UGH.
TUMP
NEVER MIND THAT. IBUKI...
IN HERE...
HARUMA?
ALL...
ALL OF THE STUDENTS OF SHISEIKAN...
...ARE HERE.
GRINN
HE'S HERE WITH US.

BWAAA
STOMP
STOMP
PSST
WHAT'S THAT SOUND?
STOMP
?!
HEY!
LOOK!
FWAAP
至誠館高等学校
SHISEIKAN HIGH SCHOOL.
SHISEIKAN HIGH SCHOOL
HA HA
THOSE BRATS...
NOT TAKING THIS SERIOUSLY, HUH?

YOU BRATS! STOP WASTING TIME...
...AND GET OUT HERE!
STOMP
STOMP
KLOP

DRESS UNIFORMS...
SO YOU CAME WEARING YOUR BURIAL CLOTHES.
HA HA.
WELL, IF ANYTHING, WE GOT MANNERS.
VROOM
VROOM
OH.
?!
OH!
OH!
HUH ?!
?!
TASUKU, LOOK OUT!
RUN AWAY!
AHH!!
NOW WHAT?
ROOM
THUDD

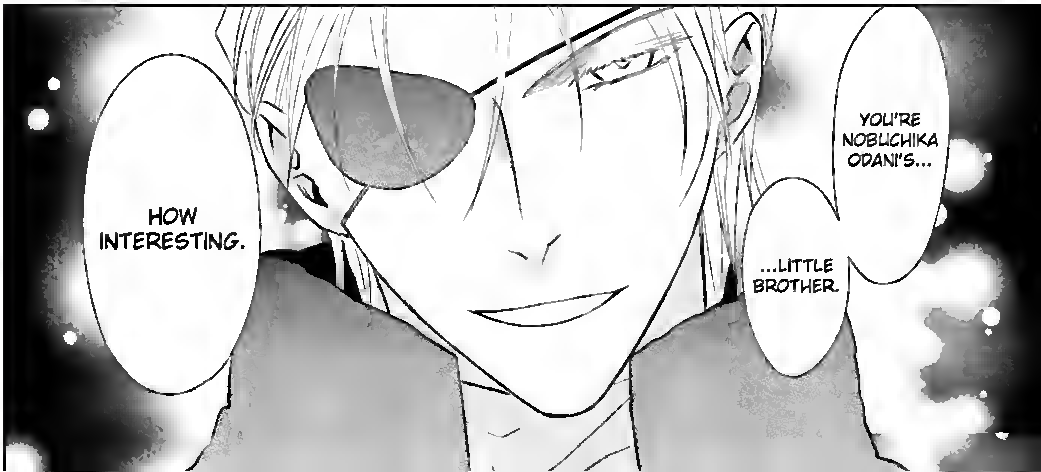
OUCH!
THUDD
VROOM
AHHHHH!!
SKREECH
WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!
STOMP
GRAPP
!
?!
DON'T INJURE A WARRIOR RIGHT AS HE'S GOING INTO BATTLE!
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?!
You trying to kill me?!

AHHH
HEY, STOP! ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME?
IT'S...
...YOSHICHIKA.
AHHH
IS IT?!
HA HA
GIVE IT A REST? WHO ARE YOU, ANYWAY?
DID YOU COME HERE ALONE?
YEAH.
WELL DONE GETTING HERE WITHOUT GETTING LOST.
SHUT UP!
YOSHICHIKA

WHAT...ARE YOU DOING HERE ALONE?

HEY.
YOU'RE REIJI, RIGHT?
I DON'T BELIEVE IT.
HOLD
I'M YOSHICHIKA ...
...ODANI.
HE'S ...
...GONE TOO.

TMP
AH...


YOU'RE NOBUCHIKA ODANI'S...
...LITTLE BROTHER.
HOW INTERESTING.

ALL OF THE KEY PLAYERS ARE HERE.
NOW THEN...
KNOCK IT OFF ALREADY.
"DON'T RESIST AND MAKE THIS WORSE FOR YOURSELVES."
"SURRENDER NOW."
I AM OBLIGATED AS AN ADULT TO SAY THIS.
...THEN WE'LL GLADLY ACCEPT THAT GUILT.
AND IF CARRYING OUT THE WILL OF THE STUDENTS OF SHISEIKAN IS A CRIME...
THAT WAS NEVER WHAT YOU WANTED, WAS IT?
EXCELLENT.
...WE NEVER WOULD HAVE FOUGHT BACK IN THE FIRST PLACE.
IF WE'RE GOING TO SURRENDER NOW...

KLACK
WELL THEN...
NO QUARTER ASKED, NONE GIVEN.
WHAT'S GOING ON?
WHY ARE YOU DRAWING SWORDS AGAINST KIDS? STOP!
STAY BACK?
TAP
SIR?
OUR ORDERS ARE TO HOLD POSITION.
BUT?!
...!
NO FUNNY BUSINESS, GOT IT? OR ELSE I'LL KILL YA.
WE NEED YOU GUYS AS A HUMAN BARRICADE TO SHUT OUT THE MEDIA.

I WANT TO BE FREE TO DO THIS OUR WAY.
...SO I ASKED ...
...FOR A FEW FAVORS FROM SOME ACQUAINTANCES.
HUH.
HOW FAR DOES YOUR INFLUENCE REACH ANYWAY?
OOH, I'M SCARED.
WHAT...
...IS ABOUT TO START HERE?
OH HOW...
...I'VE LONGED FOR THIS DAY.

THIS DAY'S FINALLY HERE.
THE DAY WHEN I CAN CLEANSE THIS WORLD...
...OF EVERYTHING WITH THE FOUL STENCH OF SEISHIRO.
I'M ESPECIALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO DEALING WITH YOU.
RIGHT?
SEISHIRO'S LAST HEIR.

SNIKK
HOLD
I HAVE A SCORE TO SETTLE...
...WITH YOU.
KLAK
MY NAME IS HARUMA KOKONOE!
I'M A FIRST-YEAR STUDENT AT SHISEIKAN HIGH SCHOOL!
THERE'S NO FURTHER NEED FOR TALK.
PREPARE TO DIE.

HARUMA!
HOW ABOUT WE GET THIS WAR STARTED?
WELL THEN!
HA! BRING IT ON!
WELL SAID, LITTLE GUY!
END

#31: LET SLIP THE DOGS OF WAR!

DASSH
WELL THEN!
HOW ABOUT WE GET THIS WAR STARTED?

HEY! GO!
KEEP ATTACKING!
KRAK
GAH! THERE'S TOO MANY OF THEM!
THEY'RE SO ENERGETIC!
BUT HOW'RE WE SUPPOSED TO TAKE CARE OF ALL OF THESE GUYS.
SIGH. THAT'S SOME BIG TALK.
YEAH...
UH?
SMASH
BUT THEY AREN'T THAT GREAT.
WHERE'S THE EYE PATCH GUY AND HIS UNDERLINGS ?!
IS THIS ALL YOU'VE GOT? GIVE US A CHALLENGE!
HEEEY!

KLIK
WHAT IS IT ALREADY!
KLIK
OVER THERE!
KLIK
HUH?
KLIK
IT'S THE LEADER OF THE EXTREMISTS! WHEN DID HE GET CLEAR OVER THERE?
THEY JUST WALKED RIGHT BY US DURING THE FIGHT.
YOU IDIOT!
THAT'S NOT THE PROBLEM!

THEY JUST TOOK A MAJOR STRATEGIC POSITION.
あさりなんこんじゃ!!
DON'T LET THEM IN SO EASILY!
IS THIS OKAY?
BOSS.
THUMP
THUD
UGH
ISN'T THE GUIDED TOUR A BIT MUCH.
THMP
I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE EXTREMISTS OR SHISEIKAN. I'M NOT INTERESTED IN EITHER OF THESE CLIQUES.
SO YOU SAY, BUT NOW YOU'RE FOLLOWING YUKINARI...
...AND ARE BETRAYING THE SHISEIKAN STUDENTS.

I DON'T MIND THE EFFORT IF IT'S FOR OBSERVING BEAUTIFUL THINGS.
YOU REALLY CALL THIS EFFORT?
THOSE THREE...
...EACH FEEL STRONGLY...
...AND WILL USE THESE EMOTIONS TO BATTLE.
HOW EXCITING.
THIS SHOULD BE A BEAUTIFUL SCENE, DON'T YOU THINK?
....

YOU'RE THE WORST.
YOU NEVER CHANGE, DO YOU?
KLAK
SHISEIKAN...
THIS PLACE BRINGS BACK SO MANY MEMORIES.
LIKE THOSE DAYS I PASSED HERE WITH SEISHIRO.
....

PUFF
HUFF
HUFF
WAIT!
STOMMP
HOLD ON, GRAMPS.
WHO LET YOU IN?
KLSSH
SHISEIKAN...
...ISN'T A PLACE FOR YOU DIRTY EXTREMISTS TO SET FOOT IN.
KLINK
GET LOST!
KLANG

GRAB
CRACK
WOOSH
GWAH!
SMASH
Al...
BAP
UGH!
WHOA WHOA
KLAK
THUD
LISTEN WELL.
I WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION.

YOU MAY THINK THAT YOU'RE MAKING YOUR LAST STAND HERE AT SHISEIKAN...
...AND YOU ARE DOING EVERY-THING TO PROTECT IT.
BUT THIS PLACE IS NOT YOURS TO BEGIN WITH.
THIS IS OUR STAGE.
WHEN DID IT BECOME YOURS, IDIOT?
YAANK
WHEN...
...YOU ASK?

WATCH YOUR MOUTH, KID.
THOWCK
BE RESPECTFUL TOWARD AN ALUMNUS.
!

WSSSH
FWIP
...EYE-PATCH GUY!
THAT...
?!
CROWD
CROWD
STOP.
REINFORCE-MENTS..
WE WON'T LET YOU PASS.
WE'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU.
HOW MANY ARE THERE ANYWAY?

HEY!
COMING THROUGH.
UKYO!
CHIKAGE!
!
PRINCE!
HI THERE.
DON'T LOOK SO DOWN.
HA HA, I GET WHY YOU MIGHT, THOUGH.
YOU GUYS JUST RUN ON THROUGH.
WE'LL CLEAR THE WAY FOR YOU.
IT'S AAALL RIGHT.
BUT!
WHAT?!
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?!
HOW ARE YOU GOING TO BEAT ALL OF THEM?!
YOU'RE RIGHT. IT'LL BE HARD WITH JUST ONE SWORD.

THAT'S WHY...
FWISH
...I BROUGHT THIS!♡

WHAT THE?
ちがだ♡っ…!!
YOU SAID IT SO CUTELY!♡
Y-YOU BRATS...
STOP MESSING AROUND!
YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN STOP US?!

SWOOSH
IT'LL BE FINE.
SEE?
IT'S OKAY.
WHOA...

LEAVE IT TO THEM.
STRUGGLE ALL YOU LIKE. IT DOESN'T MATTER.
I WILL DESTROY EVERY TRACE OF SEISHIRO THAT REMAINS HERE.

YOU'LL DIE BEFORE THEM OR AFTER THEM– THERE'S NOT MUCH OF A DIFFERENCE.
MORE IMPORTANTLY, YOU HAVE YOUR OWN ROLE TO FILL.

SEISHIRO ONCE STOOD ON THIS SUMMIT.
AND I WILL ERASE THE LAST VESTIGES OF HIM FROM THIS SPOT, AND COMPLETE MY PERFECT WORLD.
I WANT TO DUEL WITH YOU.
COME UP HERE.
SEISHIRO'S HEIR.

SLAM
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
?!
YEAAAGH! HARUMA KOKONOE!
HUFF
IT'LL TAKE MORE THAN THAT TO KEEP US DOWN.
OF COURSE WE ARE!
ARE YOU OKAY?
PUFF
PUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
...AND LET THE ENEMY TAKE THE BUILDING!
YOU HESITATED ...
NEVER MIND US! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
WHAT HAPPENED?
SO GO ON.
NO MATTER WHAT!
WE DECIDED TO CRUSH THE EXTREMISTS!

GET OUT OF HERE!
DON'T GET HELD UP HERE!
LET'S GO.
HUH?!
CHIKARA?!
WHAT? DON'T TELL ME YOU CAME THIS FAR AND DON'T HAVE THE GUTS TO CHARGE INSIDE.
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT AT ALL!
WHAT?
DON'T WORRY. THERE ARE PLENTY OF PEOPLE TO BEAT UP INSIDE.
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT!

LEAVING SOMEONE BEHIND AND SENDING THEM OFF ARE TOTALLY DIFFERENT!
WHAT ABOUT YOU, RUNT?
GET HIM ONCE FOR US...
...AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, FOR JIN.
NO MATTER WHAT.
WE'RE ALL MAD HERE.
LET OLD EYE-PATCH KNOW, OKAY?
THE GUY SINGLED YOU OUT AND PICKED A FIGHT WITH YOU. YOU'RE NOT SUCH A COWARD THAT YOU'D TURN THAT DOWN, RIGHT?

OF COURSE.
CLENCH

UKYO.
SHIMA. PRINCE.
WE'RE OUT.
SEE YOU LATER.

STOMP
WELL NOW...
IT'S ABOUT TIME...
...WE GET TO WORK!

BOOM
BOOM
HERE WE GO!
HAJIME KANEDA DETECTIVE GROUP, HENCEFORTH, THE BRAINS, IS HERE!
SHATTER
WHY, YOU!
STOP GETTING IN OUR WAY!
GET LOST, SMALL FRY!
GRAB

I MAY BE A SMALL FRY...
...BUT I'LL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO SAVE SHISEIKAN.
FWASH
IF I CAN'T BEAT YOU WITH BRAWN, I CAN WITH BRAINS.
BOOM
DAMMIT!
WHY WON'T YOU JUST GIVE UP ALREADY?!
YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN WIN?

EVEN IF YOU SURVIVE THIS, THERE'S NO PLACE FOR YOU IN THIS WORLD ANYMORE.
WHY DO YOU FIGHT? WHY DON'T YOU TAKE THE EASIER PATH, LIKE A NORMAL PERSON?
NORMAL?
WE'VE BEEN SWORDSMEN...
...SINCE WE WERE BORN.
I WONDER IF ANYONE HERE HAS EVER THOUGHT IF THIS LIFE WAS EASY OR NOT. PROBABLY NOT.
WHEN OUR FRIENDS ARE IN TROUBLE, WE HELP THEM. THAT'S ALL THIS IS.
THAT'S NORMAL. THAT'S SHISEIKAN.

LOOKS LIKE WE'RE...
...MOSTLY DONE OUT HERE.

GO AFTER THEM.
UKYO...
YEAH.
THANKS.
WE'LL SEE YOU LATER.
DON'T YOU THINK SO, SUZUNO-SUKE?
HE'S A TOUGH ONE.
LATER...

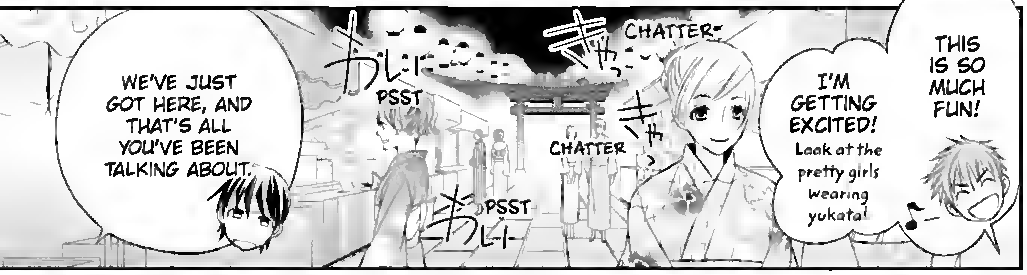
SUZUNO-SUKE?
OH...
YOU FELL ASLEEP.
LATER... HUH...
I HOPE I DON'T SEE THEM UNTIL MUCH, MUCH LATER...

WE ALREADY KNEW...
...WHEN THIS WAR BROKE OUT.
YOU WOULD SHOULDER ALL OF SHISEIKAN.
DON'T LOOK BACK.
I'D SEEN THIS.
DRIVE ON THROUGH!
GRIP

THIS WAS A FAMILIAR SIGHT.
HIS SWIFTLY SWINGING SWORD AND HIS WILD, STEELY EYES...
...FILLED WITH AN INCONSOLABLE RAGE.
BUT AT THE SAME TIME...
...I FELT THAT SOMETHING WAS DIFFERENT.
AHHHH!

...INSTEAD...
IT'S DIFFERENT FROM BACK THAT DAY BACK THEN..
WHEN THE SKY WAS CLOUDED BY RAIN
THAT ISN'T...
...WHAT YOUR SWORD IS FOR!
...I SAW OUR FRIENDS.
I DIDN'T SEE VEN-GEANCE IN HIS EYES...
END

#31.5 [ANOTHER STORY]: SEISHIRO'S YUKATA


WE'VE JUST GOT HERE, AND THAT'S ALL YOU'VE BEEN TALKING ABOUT.
PSST
PSST
CHATTER
CHATTER
I'M GETTING EXCITED! Look at the pretty girls wearing yukata!
THIS IS SO MUCH FUN!

WHERE'S HARUMA?
TSK
I'M JUST BUMMED WE'RE WEARING STREET CLOTHES.
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
DID HE OVERSLEEP AGAIN?
NONE OF US HAVE ANY NICE CLOTHES
OH, HE JUST...
HUH?
HE STAYS AT THE DORMS AND IS ALWAYS TRAINING, SO HE LIVES BY THE T-SHIRT AND ATHLETIC WEAR

YUKATA! NO FAIR!
HE'S GONNA GET ALL THE ATTENTION!
LOOKING GOOD
YOU BOTH LOOK GREAT.
MAKI KNOWS HOW TO DEAL WITH GIRLS
KASUGA MADE THEM FOR US.
BLUSH
YUKARI!
YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL!
BLUSH
HARUMA.
AND YUKARI.
THOSE ARE LOOKING REALLY GOOD. I'M SURPRISED THEY LOOK AS NORMAL AS THEY DO, SINCE KASUGA MADE THEM.
....
HEY...
HMM? What's wrong?
BLUSH
SNICKER
SNICKER
WHAT'S THAT?
THAT'S SO CUTE.
HEE HEE
HEY, DON'T TELL ME...
FEELS LIKE A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE LOOKING THIS WAY.

LOVE SEISHIRO
浮誠士郎
ドドオオ
DA-DAA オオオン
BWAAAAHA HA HA HA
SNIKK
Y-YOU LOOK COOL.
Totally cool!
SHINK
I'M SURPRISED YOU WENT ALONG WITH THIS.
NOD
FIGIT
FIGIT
SIZZLE
LET'S GET BACK TO THE FESTIVAL, SHALL WE?
IT'S BECAUSE OF MY MEMORIES.
SEISHIRO...
.. LIKED THIS FESTIVAL TOO.
WE CAME EVERY YEAR.
OH?
SO YOU'RE JUST BRAGGING.
EEK
HMM?
WHAT'S GOING ON?
PSST

HEY!
T...
THAT'S...
...THE SECOND-YEAR STUDENTS!
?!
THUD
THUD
THUD
HE'S TOO GOOD-LOOKING!
ALL THE WOMEN ON THE ROAD ARE COLLAPSING!
HMM? Haruma?
WHY...?
IT-IT'S JIN!
MACKIE, CALM DOWN.
HI THERE!

H...
HEY!
Why'd you draw your sword all of a sudden?!
WHY...
...ARE YOU WEARING IT?
CLANG
GRAB
PSST
....
STOP UNDRESSING ME!
HEY, STOP..
....
EEK
UH-OH
あわわ
HEY, DON'T UNDO THE BELT.
WAIT, HARUMA.
WHY?!
LET ME EXPLAIN.
...IS SEISHIRO'S YUKATA!
THIS...

KLAMK
KLIMK
OH NO. NOW WHAT DO WE DO.
AHH. OKAY. NOW I GET IT.
OKAY, I'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS.
SERI-OUSLY?! You can?!
HEY, HARUMA!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING TRYING TO STRIP JIN?
THE YUKATA IS ALSO...
...A MEMENTO OF SEISHIRO!
IF JIN'S GOING TO WEAR IT...
...I'D RATHER-
I THOUGHT THAT'S WHAT WAS GOING ON.
180 CM TALL. FIT.
180cm
168cm
168 CM TALL. THIN.
STAB
GRAB
GASP
FIRST OF ALL!
GAAH
LISTEN UP, HARUMA!
YOU'VE MADE ONE FATAL MISTAKE!
YOU'RE NOT TALL ENOUGH!
BESIDES...
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE WEARING TODAY?
THAT'S RIGHT! IT'S A HANDMADE YUKATA THAT KASUGA PUT A LOT OF HARD WORK INTO.

HARUMA, I STAYED UP ALL NIGHT SEWING FOR YOU. PRETTY IMPRESSIVE FOR A FORMER STREET PUNK, EH?
SHOCK
SEISHIRO MAY BE VERY IMPORTANT TO YOU...
...BUT KASUGA PUT A LOT OF LOVE INTO THIS, AND SHE'S JUST AS IMPORTANT TO YOU, RIGHT?
ARE YOU JUST GOING TO THROW THAT WORK AWAY?
晴馬さまのために
わたし
一針一針
縫わせていただきますわ♪
元ヤンが夜なべしてる～♪
UGH...
UGH
DING
DROP
DING
HEH
AWESOME, IBUKI! NO ONE GETS HIM BETTER THAN YOU!
K.O.!!
I'M...
I'M SORRY, HARUMA...
I GAVE IT TO HIM AND ASKED HIM TO WEAR IT.
I'M SORRY.
YUKARI! IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT!
I THOUGHT MY BROTHER WOULD HAVE WANTED THAT...

I'LL GROW.
HMM?
I'LL GROW TALLER.
AS MUCH AS I HAVE TO!
?
BUT YOU HAVE TO LET ME HAVE MY MEMENTOS OF SEISHIRO TOO.
....
IT COULD BE NEXT YEAR OR THE YEAR AFTER.
!
RSSLE
THEN YOU CAN WEAR IT NEXT TIME.
HE WAS BOTHERED BY IT...
YES...
WE WILL CONTINUE TO DRIVE FORTH.
WE CAN...
...ALL COME BACK HERE AGAIN.
BOOM
NICE FIREWORKS!
END

SAMURAI DRIVE

SAMURAI DRIVE REACHED A SEVENTH VOLUME. RECENTLY, I FEEL STRONGLY THAT I WAS ABLE TO GET THIS FAR THANKS TO ALL OF THE PEOPLE WHO READ AND SUPPORTED THIS WORK. THANK YOU!

IN THIS VOLUME THERE ARE A LOT OF SCENES THAT READERS REALLY RESPONDED TO WHEN IT WAS PUBLISHED IN THE MAGAZINE (IF YOU HAVEN'T SEEN IT YET, GO RIGHT AHEAD). I PUT MY HEART AND SOUL INTO DRAWING THEM, SO SEEING THESE SCENES IN BOOK FORM OVERWHELMS ME WITH EMOTION.

SAMURAI DRIVE IS HEADING INTO ITS CLIMAX, SO I HOPE YOU'LL STICK WITH ME JUST A LITTLE BIT LONGER. BY THE WAY, IN THE LAST VOLUME I MENTIONED I WOULD UPLOAD SOME SKETCHES ON TWITTER, BUT EVEN THOUGH VOLUME SEVEN IS BEING PUBLISHED, THEY STILL HAVEN'T APPEARED YET... WHOOPS... I WANT TO BE ABLE TO PROVIDE MORE THINGS FOR MY FANS IN 2013!! (THAT'S MY NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION.) OKAY, IT'S TIME FOR THE HOME STRETCH! SEE YOU IN VOLUME EIGHT!

SORRY MY WRITING IS TINY AS ALWAYS.

FEBRUARY 2013 – FUJIKO KOSUMI

Special Thanks

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YUZU-TAN

COMFORT PROVIDER: HACHIMITSU AND TO ALL MY READERS

SAMURAI DRIVE
Volume 7

KADDKAWA MANGA

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